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GOLD.

THE fable of Midas, whose touch transformed even his food into gold, testifies that the ancients felt the limits, while they adored the virtues of the wonderful metal. Since the morning of the world, gold has been the chief object of desire of mankind; and it is highly probable that a very large percentage would still make the same selection as the son of Gordius, were the opportunity afforded, even with the knowledge of all it implied. For from the days of Midas until now this gold,

Bright and yellow, hard and cold,
Molten, graven, hammered, and rolled;
Heavy to get and light to hold,

has been

Hoarded, bartered, bought and sold,
Stolen, borrowed, squandered, doled;
Spurned by the young, but hugged by the old
To the very verge of the churchyard mould.

No other material object has retained in a like degree the united devotion of man in all ages. And not merely because gold is the synonym of money. By money we mean that by which the riches of the world can be expressed and transferred. But money may exist in various forms. It may be rock-salt, as in Abyssinia; cowries and beads, as in Africa; tobacco, as formerly in Virginia. Gold is greater than money, because gold includes money, and makes money possible. Upon gold rests the whole superstructure of the wealth of the world. Let us consider for a moment why this is, and how this is.

And first of all, it is desirable because it is scarce. Abundance begets cheapness, and rarity the reverse. That is most valuable which involves the greatest amount of effort to acquire. But we must not jump from this to the conclusion that were gold to become as plentiful as iron, and be as easily obtained, it would recede in value to the equivalent of iron, bulk for bulk. Gold has an intrinsic value superior to that of all other metals because it has *useful* properties possessed by

none other. It is more durable than any, and is practically indestructible, as Egyptian excavations and Schliemann's discoveries in Greece have shown. It may be melted and remelted without losing in weight. It resists the action of acids, but is readily fusible. It is so malleable that a grain of it may be beaten out to cover fifty-six square inches with leaves—used in gilding and in other ways innumerable—only the twenty-eight thousand two-hundredth of an inch in thickness. It is so ductile that a grain of it may be drawn out in wire five hundred feet in length. The splendour of its appearance excels that of all other metals. Its supereminent claims were symbolised by the Jews in the golden breastplates of the priests, as they are by the Christian in his highest hopes of a Golden City hereafter. We signalise the sacredness of the marriage-tie with the gold-ring.

Professors of what Carlyle called the 'dismal science' have not unfrequently expressed a contempt for gold; but in doing so, they have regarded it merely as the correlative of money. As money, according to them, is merely a counter with little or no intrinsic value, therefore gold has no intrinsic value beyond its adaptability in the arts. John Stuart Mill held that were the supply of gold suddenly doubled, no one would be the richer, for the only effect would be to double the price of everything. Stanley Jevons went so far as to say that the gold produced in Australia and California represented 'a great and almost dead loss of labour.' He held that 'gold is one of the last things which can be considered wealth in itself,' and that 'it is only so far as the cheapening of gold renders it more available for gilding and for plate, for purposes of ornament and use other than money, that we can be said to gain directly from gold discoveries.' Another writer, Bonamy Price, asserts that it is a 'wonderful apostasy,' a 'fallacy full of emptiness and absurdity,' to suppose that gold is precious except as a tool. We might multiply quotations all tending to show that while a certain class of philosophers admit a limited value in gold as a

metal, they claim that it loses the value immediately it is transformed into a coin.

This contention is not tenable in reason. It is directly against the concentrated faith of the ages. Gold is desirable for the sake of its own special virtues, and it becomes additionally valuable when employed as the medium of exchange among nations. It is because of the universal desire of nations to possess it, that it enjoys its supremacy as money. By its comparative indestructibility it commands and enjoys the proud privilege of being the universal standard of value of the world. It is, therefore, elevated, instead of being degraded, by the impress of the mint stamp, for to its own intrinsic value is added that of being the passport of nations. This is a dignity attained by no other metal. It has been urged that the government guarantee of a solvent nation stamped upon a piece of tin, or wood, or paper, will form a counter quite as valuable as gold for a medium of exchange. So it might, but the circulation would only be within certain limits. A Scotch bank-note is passed from hand to hand with even more confidence than a sovereign—in Scotland. But take one to England and observe the difficulty and often impossibility of changing it. The pound-note is worth a sovereign, but its circulating value is local. Even with a Bank of England note, travellers on the continent occasionally experience some difficulty in effecting a satisfactory exchange. But is there a country in the most rudimentary condition of commerce, where an English sovereign, or a French napoleon, or an American eagle, cannot be at once exchanged at the price of solid gold?

It is true that a nation may form a currency of anything, but only a currency of the precious metal can be of universal circulation; and that is simply because the metal is precious.

Now, when Bonamy Price said that gold is only wealth in the same sense as a cart is—namely, as a vehicle for fetching that which we desire, he said merely what could be said of wheat or cotton, or any other product of nature and labour usually esteemed wealth. You cannot eat gold, nor can you clothe yourself with wheat; and the trouble of Midas would have been quite as great had his touch transformed everything into cotton shirts. Wealth does not consist in mere possession, but in possessing that which can be used. Wheat and cotton constitute wealth, because one can not only consume them, but in almost all circumstances can exchange them for other things which we desire. But they are perishable, which gold is not—at least for all practical purposes. At the ordinary rate of abrasion, a sovereign in circulation will last many years without any very perceptible loss of weight. Gold, as a possession, is a high form of wealth, because one can either use it or exchange it at pleasure. The fact of there being cases where a man would give all the gold he possesses for a drink of water, does not prove that gold then becomes valueless, but simply that something else has become for the time-being more valuable.

Again, if it be true, as Jevons says, that gold is one of the last things to be regarded as wealth, and the labour expended in its production almost a dead loss, and therefore a wrong to the human race, the world should be very much

poorer for all the enormous production of the last half-century. On the contrary, the world has gone on increasing in the appliances of wealth, in conditions of comfort, and in diffusion of education.

The addition to the world's stock of gold has permitted the creation of an enormous amount of gold-certificates, as bank-notes and bills of exchange may be regarded, the existence of which has facilitated commercial operations which otherwise would not have been possible. In theory, we exchange our coal and iron for the cotton, wheat, &c., of other countries; but as we cannot mete out the exactly equal values in 'kind,' we settle the difference nominally in gold, but actually in paper representing gold. But the gold must nevertheless exist, or the operation would be impossible. It is as when a man buys, let us say, five hundred tons of pig-iron in Glasgow. He does not actually receive into his hands five hundred tons of iron, but he receives a warrant which entitles him to obtain such iron when and how he pleases. Though the purchaser may never see the iron which he has bought, the iron must be there, and producible at his demand. On the faith of the transaction, he knows that he has command over five hundred tons of iron; none of which may perhaps, save the 'sample,' have come under his cognisance.

Of course there is no complete analogy between an iron warrant and a paper currency, but it serves for the moment as a simple illustration. To discuss the differences would lead us beyond the design of the present paper.

Probably one great reason why gold so early in the history of the world assumed its leading position as a standard of value is, that it is found in a pure state. So also is silver, which is the nearest rival of gold. Primitive races used these metals long before the art of smelting was discovered. These two metals were both rare, both found pure, both easily refined, both admitting of a splendid polish, both malleable and ductile, both durable. Silver is more destructible than gold, less durable, less rare, and even less useful in some respects. It has, therefore, always had a lower value than gold.

It has been shown by several writers, among whom may be named William Newmarch and Professor Fawcett, that up to the year 1848, the world had outgrown its supplies of the precious metals, and that commerce was languishing for want of the wherewithal to adjust the exchanges of communities. Previous to that year, the principal sources of supply were South America, the West Coast of Africa, Russia in Europe and Asia, and the islands of the Malay Archipelago. According to the calculations of M. Chevalier, the total production of both gold and silver from these sources between 1492 and 1848 was equal in value to seventeen hundred and forty millions sterling. The importation of gold, however, was small; and the total stock of the metal in Christendom in 1848 is estimated to have been only five hundred and sixty millions sterling. The production since that year has been very remarkable. Most of us are familiar with the gilded obelisks or pyramids erected in various International Exhibitions to illustrate the bulk of gold yielded in different quarters of the globe; but these things only arrest the eye

for the moment. Let us look at the figures. In 1848 Californian gold began to come forward; and in 1851 the Australian fields were opened. Between 1849 and 1875 the production of the world is estimated at six hundred and sixteen millions sterling, so that in twenty-seven years the stock of gold was more than doubled. The average annual supply previous to 1848 was eight millions sterling; in 1852 the production was thirty-six and a half millions sterling. An Australian authority estimates the yield of the colonies from 1851 to 1881 as two hundred and seventy-seven millions sterling; and Mr Hogarth Patterson gives the total production of the world between 1849 and 1880 as seven hundred and ten millions sterling. The old sources of supply have not, we believe, increased in yield, so, if we calculate their production on the average at eight millions annually, we shall easily arrive at the donation of the American and Australian mines.

The statisticians of the United States Mint estimate that the total production of gold in the world during the four hundred years ending in 1882 was ten thousand three hundred and ninety-four tons, equal in value to £1,442,359,572. During the same period the production of silver was one hundred and ninety-one thousand seven hundred and thirty-one tons, of the value of £1,716,463,795. On the basis of the last three years, the average annual production of gold in the world is now twenty-one and a half millions sterling. Taking 1881 as an illustration, the largest contributors were—

United States.....	£6,940,000
Australasia.....	6,225,000
Russia.....	5,710,200
Mexico.....	197,000
Germany.....	48,200
Chili.....	25,754
Colombia.....	800,000
Austria.....	248,000
Venezuela.....	455,000
Canada.....	219,000

We need not give the smaller contributions of other countries. There are twenty gold-yielding countries in all, but eight of them yield an aggregate of little over half a million sterling.

As regards the employment of gold, it is estimated that fifteen million pounds-worth annually is required for ornament and employment in the arts and manufactures. This, on the production of 1881, would leave only six and a half million pounds-worth for coining purposes each year.

No greater proof of the universal desire of man to possess gold could be afforded than by the heterogeneous mass of peoples who flocked to the gold-diggings. Men of every colour, of every religion, and from every clime, were drawn thither by the attraction of the yellow metal. It is not too much to say that nothing else could have concentrated on one object so many diverse elements. And it may be said further, that but for the discoveries of gold, the rich wheat-plains of California and the verdant pastures of Australia might have been lying to this day waste and unproductive.

Mr Hogarth Patterson has attempted to prove that to this increase in our supplies of gold is due the unparalleled expansion of the com-

merce of the world within the present generation. We do not need to accept this extreme view, while we can clearly perceive that the volume of gold has not proved the dead-weight to strangle us, which other writers had predicted. Mr Patterson may to a certain extent be mixing up cause and effect, but he is nearer the truth than those who refuse to consider gold as one of the first elements of wealth.

But the increase in the supply of gold has had another effect. It has, concurrently with an increase in the production of silver, helped to reduce the relative value of the latter metal. The consequences are curious. Previous to 1816, silver was what is termed a legal tender, in England to any amount; but in that year the sovereign was made the sole standard of the pound sterling. In other words, if one man be owing another, say, a hundred pounds, the latter is not legally bound to accept payment doled out in either silver or copper. Other countries have since de-monetised silver, which has thus become so depreciated in relation to gold, that Mr Leighton Jordan, in an able book called *The Standard of Value*, affirms that the interest on the National Debt has now to be paid in a currency fifteen to twenty per cent. more valuable than was in the option of the lender prior to 1816. According to the bi-metalists, the de-monetisation of silver has depreciated the metal, and unduly appreciated gold, or at all events has prevented the cheapening of the latter metal, which should have resulted from the greater abundance of silver.

Against the plea for a dual standard there is a great deal to be urged. The question, however, is too wide to be entered upon at this stage, and we will content ourselves with stating one great objection to bi-metallism, and that is, that it would be inoperative unless its adoption were universal; and that so deeply is gold rooted in the affections of mankind, the universal adoption of silver also, is practically hopeless. Into the world of commerce, into the arena of industry, into the storehouses of wealth, 'tis Gold which buys admittance.'

BY MEAD AND STREAM.

BY CHARLES GIBBON.

CHAPTER XXI.—DREAMS.

AND there was a night of happy wonderment at Willowmere—for, of course, it was to Madge that Philip first carried his story of the Golconda mine which had been thrown open to him. The joy of Ali Baba when the secret of the robbers' cave was revealed to him was great—and selfish. He thought of what a good time he would have, and how he would triumph over his ungracious brother. Philip's joy was greater; for his treasure-trove set him dreaming fine dreams of being able to 'hurry up' the millennium. On his way from the city his mind was filled with a hailstorm of projects of which he had hitherto had no conception.

Naturally his imagination grew on what it fed; and as he earnestly strove to shape into words his visions of the noble works that could, would,

and should be done in the near future, his pulse quickened and his cheeks glowed with enthusiasm.

They were in the oak parlour; the day's work done; and the soothing atmosphere of an orderly household filling the room with the sense of contented ease. Aunt Hussy was sewing, and spoke little. Uncle Dick smoked one of his long churchwardens—a box of which came to him regularly every Christmas from a Yorkshire friend—and listened with genial interest, commenting in his own way on Philip's schemes.

After the first breathless moment of astonishment, Madge's eyes were as bright with enthusiasm as her lover's: her face was alternately flushed and pale. She approved of everything he said; and she, too, was seeing great possibilities in this new Golconda.

'The world,' quoth Philip, 'is big enough for us all; and there is work enough for everybody who is willing to work. It is not work which fails, but workers. We have classified and divided our labour until we have fallen into a social system of caste as rigid as that of the Hindu, but without his excuse. Men won't turn their hands to whatever may be offered nowadays. They clamour that they starve for want of a job, when they mean that they cannot get the job which pleases them best. Everybody wants exactly what is "in his line," and won't see that he might get on well enough in another line till he found room again in his own.'

'Human nature has a weakness for wanting the things it likes best, and that it's most in the way of doing,' said Uncle Dick, pressing down the tobacco in the bowl of his pipe with a careful movement of the left hand's little finger.

'But human nature need not starve because it cannot get what it likes best,' retorted Philip warmly. 'If men will do with their might what their hands can find to do, they will soon discover that there is a heap of work lying undone in the world.'

And so, taking this principle as the basis of his argument, he went on to expound his views of the future conservative democracy of Universal Co-operation.

The first step to be taken was to start some enterprise in which every class of workmen should find employment—the skilled mechanic and the unskilled labourer; the inventor, the man of brains, and the mechanical clerk; the spinner, the weaver, the tailor; the butcher, the baker, the candlestick-maker—all would be required. Their banner would bear the homely legend, 'Willing to work,' and no man or boy who enlisted under it should ever again have a right to say: 'I have got no work to do.'

There would be no drones in the hive; for every man would reap the full reward of what he produced according to its market value. No man should be paid for spending so many hours daily in a fixed place. That was an erroneous system—the incubator of strikes and of the absurd rules of trades-unions, by which the dull sluggish

was enabled to hold down to his own level the quick-witted and industrious. Every man should have a direct interest in doing the best he could, and the most he could or the most he cared to do. Hear him!—the young heart beating with the fond hopes which others have proved so futile; and Madge listening with a smile of joyful conviction and confidence.

'Another thing we shall sweep away altogether—the petty deceits—the petty strivings to overreach another by lies and tricks of trade, as they are called.'

'And how may you be going to do that, I'd like to learn?' was the sceptical query of the yeoman.

'By making men feel that it isn't worth while to tell lies or invent tricks.'

'Seems to me you want to invent a new world,' said Uncle Dick, a placid wreath of smoke encircling his brow, and a contented smile intimating that he was pretty well content to take things as they were.

'Not at all,' rejoined Philip. 'I only want to bring the best of this world uppermost.'

'But doesn't the best find its own way uppermost?' interposed Aunt Hussy; 'cream does, and butter does.'

'So does froth, and it ain't the best part of the beer, mother,' said Uncle Dick with his genial guffaw; 'and for the matter of that, so does scum.'

'They have their uses, though, like everything else,' was the dame's prompt check.

'Not a doubt, and there's where the mystery lies: things have to be a bit mixed in this world; and they get mixed somehow in spite of you. There ain't nobody has found out yet a better plan of mixing them than nature herself.'

That was the counter-check; and Madge gave the checkmate.

'But Philip does not want to alter the natural order of things: he only wants to help people to understand it, and be happy in obeying it.'

This pretty exposition of Philip's purpose seemed to satisfy everybody, and so it was an evening of happy wonderment at Willowmere.

As he was about to go away, Aunt Hussy asked Philip how his uncle looked.

'Oh—a good hearty sort of man,' was the somewhat awkward answer, for he did not like to own even to himself that he had been somehow disappointed by the appearance and manner of Mr Shield; 'but awfully quick and gruff. You will like him, though.'

'I like him already,' she said, smiling.

CHAPTER XXII.—HOME AGAIN.

Three passengers and the newspapers were brought to Dunthorpe station by the early London train on Wednesday morning. One of the passengers was a tall old gentleman, with straight silvery hair, a clean-shaven fresh face, and an expression of gentle kindliness which was habitual. But there was a firmness about the lips and chin which indicated that his benevolence was not to be trifled with easily. He stooped a little, but it was the stoop of one accustomed to much reading and thinking, not of any physical weakness, for his frame was stalwart, his step steady and resolute.

He asked the porter who took his travelling-bag in charge if there was any conveyance from Kingshope waiting.

'There's only one fly, sir, and that's from the *King's Head* for Mr Beecham. That you, sir?'

'Yes.'

'Then here you are, sir: it's old Jerry Mogridge who's driving, and he can't get off the seat easy owing to the rheumatics. The Harvest Festival is on at Kingshope to-day, and there wasn't another man to spare. But you couldn't have a surer driver than old Jerry, though he be failed a bit.'

Mr Beecham took his place in the fly; and after inquiring if the gentleman was comfortable, old Jerry drove away at an easy pace—indeed, the well-fed, steady-going old mare could not move at any other than an easy pace. A touch of the whip brought her to a stand-still until she had been coaxed into good-humour again. It was the boast of the *King's Head* landlord that this was a mare 'safe for a baby to drive.'

There was something in Mr Beecham's expression—an occasional dancing of the eyes—as he gazed round on the rich undulating landscape, which suggested that he had been familiar with the scene in former days, and was at intervals recognising some well-remembered spot.

September was closing, and stray trees by the roadside were shorn of many leaves, and had a somewhat ragged, scarecrow look, although some of them still haunted tufts of foliage on high branches, as if in defiance of bitter blasts. But in the Forest, where the trees were massed, the foliage was still luxuriant. The eyes rested first on a delicate green fringed with pale yellow, having a background of deepening green, shading into dark purple and black in the densest hollows.

The day was fine, and as the sun had cleared away the morning haze, there was a softness in the air that made one think of spring-time. But the falling of the many-coloured leaves, and the sweet odours which they yielded under the wheels, told that this softness was that of the twilight of the year; and the mysterious whisperings of the winds in the tree-tops were warnings of the mighty deeds they meant to do by sea and land before many days were over.

'You have been about Kingshope a long time?' said Mr Beecham, as the mare was crawling—it could not be called walking—up a long stretch of rising ground.

'More'n eighty year, man and boy,' answered old Jerry with cheerful pride. 'Ain't many about as can say that much, sir.'

'I should think not. And I suppose you know everybody here about?'

'Everybody, and their fathers afore 'em.' As Jerry said this, he turned, and leaning over the back of his seat, peered at the stranger. Then he put a question uneasily: 'You never 'longed to these parts, sir?'

'No, I do not exactly belong to these parts; but I have been here before.'

'Ah—thought you couldn't have 'longed here, or I'd have known you, though it was ever so many years gone by,' said old Jerry, much relieved at this proof that his memory had not failed him. 'Asking pardon, sir, I didn't get right hold of your name. Was it Oakem, sir?'

'Something of that kind,' said the stranger, smiling at the mistake. 'Beecham is the name.'

'Beecham,' mumbled Jerry, repeating the name several times and trying to associate it with some family of the district. 'Don't know any one of that name here away. May-happen your friends are called by another.'

'I have no friends of that name here.'

'Hope it ain't makin' too bold, sir, but may-happen you're a-goin' to stay with some of the Kingshope families?'

'I am going to stay at the *King's Head*, for a few days,' Mr Beecham replied, good-naturedly amused by Jerry's inquisitiveness; but wishing to divert his garrulity into another channel, he put a question in turn: 'Shall we be in time for the Harvest Service in the church to-day?'

'Time and to spare—barrin' th' old mare's tantrums, and she don't try them on with me. You'll see the whole county at the church to-day, sir. Parson's got it turned into a reg'lar holiday, and there's been mighty fine goings-on a-deckin' the old place up. Meetings morn and even, and a deal more courtin' nor prayin', is what I says. Hows'ever it's to be a rare thanksgivin' time this un, and the best of it is there's some'at to be thankful for.'

Jerry nodded confidentially to the stranger, as if he were letting him into a secret.

'Is that such a rare occurrence?'

'Well, sir,' replied Jerry cautiously, and peering round again with the manner of one who is afraid of being discovered in the promulgation of seditious doctrines, 'there be times when it is mighty hard to find out what we are to be thankful for, when the rot has got hold of the taters, and them big rains have laid wheat and barley all flat and tangled, and the stuff ain't barely worth the cuttin' and the leadin' and the threshin', and wages ain't high and ain't easy to get—them be times when it takes parson a deal of argy-bargy to make *some* people pretend they're grateful for the mercies. But Parson Haven knows how to do it, bless ye. He gives 'em a short sermon and a long feed, and there's real thanksgivin' after, what's'ever the harvest has been like.'

Jerry chuckled with the pleasures of retrospection, as well as of anticipation, and made a great ado putting on the skid as they began to descend towards the village.

Mr Beecham listened to this gossip with the interest of an exile returned to his native land. Whilst everywhere he meets the signs of change, he also finds countless trifles which revive the past. Even the comparison of what is, with what has been, has its pleasure, although it be mingled with an element of sadness. The sweetest memories are always touched with tender regret. We rejoice that sorrow has passed: who rejoices that time has passed?

He watched with kindly eyes the people making their way across the stubble or round by the church. The latter was a sturdy old building with a solid square tower, that looked as if it had foundations strong enough to hold it firmly in its place whatever theological or political storms might blow.

Old Jerry Mogridge had reason to be proud of that morning's work, and made his cronies of the taproom stare with his descriptions of the strange gentleman's friendly ways and liberal hand.

After seeing his rooms at the *King's Head*, Mr Beecham sauntered slowly towards the church. When he reached the porch, he paused, as if undecided whether or not to enter. The people had assembled and the bells had ceased ringing. He passed in, and despite the courtesy of an ancient verger, who would fain have given the stranger a conspicuous place, he took a seat near the door.

The ordinary aspect of the inside of Kingshope church was somewhat bare and cold-looking: at present it was aglow with sunbeams and rich colours. The pillars were bound with wisps of straw and wreaths of ground ivy, while the capitals were sheaves of wheat and barley, with a scarlet poppy here and there, and clusters of dahlias of many hues. On the broad window ledges, half-hidden in green leaves, lay the yellow succulent marrow, the purple grape, the ruddy tomato—bright-cheeked apples and juicy pears: giant sunflowers and ferns guarded the reading-desk; and on the altar was a pile of peaches and grapes, flanked by early Christmas roses—deep-red, orange, white and straw-coloured.

But the pulpit attracted most attention on this bright day. Madge and Philip had been visited by an inspiration; and, with the vicar's sanction and the aid of Pansy and Caleb, had carried it into effect. The entire pulpit and canopy were woven over with wheat and barley, giving it the appearance of a stack with the top uplifted. Round the front of the stack-pulpit were embroidered, in the bright scarlet fruit-sprays of the barberry, the opening words of the anthem for the day, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.' There was a feeling of elation in the air, to which the organist gave expression by playing the Hallelujah Chorus as the opening number. And then it was with full hearts and vigorous lungs that all joined in the hymn,

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

As he listened to the voices, rising and falling in grateful cadence, old times, old faces, old scenes, rose out of the midst of the past, and the stranger dreamed. Was there any significance to him in what he saw and heard? Was it not a generous welcome to the wanderer home? Home! His thoughts shaped themselves into words, and they were sung in his brain all the time he sat there dreamily wondering at their meaning:

'Home again, in the twilight of the year and of my life.'

He could see the Willowmere pew, and his eyes rested long on Dame Crawshaw's placid face; still longer on that of Madge. On the other side he could see the Manor pew, which was occupied by the three ladies, Alfred Crowell and Philip. Mr Hadleigh and Coutts were not there. Coutts considered it hard enough to be expected to go to church on Sunday (he did not often go); but only imbeciles, he thought, and their kin—women—went on a week-day, except on the occasion of a marriage or a funeral.

Mr Beecham's gaze rested alternately on Philip and Madge. They occupied him throughout the service. He retained his seat whilst the people were passing out, his eyes shaded by his hand, but his fingers parted, so that he could observe the lovers as they walked by him. He rose and

followed slowly, watching them with dreamy eyes; and still that phrase was singing in his brain: 'Home again, in the twilight of the year and of my life.' But he added something now: 'It is still morning with them.'

INDIAN SNAKES.

A REMINISCENCE.

WE have it on good authority, apropos of the climate of India and the chances of life there, that the British soldier who now serves one year in Bengal encounters as much risk in the mere fact of dwelling there, as in fighting three battles such as Waterloo (see Dr Moore's *Health in the Tropics*); and that the mortality amongst children up to fifteen years of age is eighty-four per thousand, as against twenty-two per thousand in twenty-four large towns of England. Statistics such as these tell their own tale. A soldier's life, as compared with a civilian's, whether official or unofficial, is by no means an unhealthy one, regulated as it is by all that experience and scientific sanitation can suggest. But what, after all, are the risks to life in a battle such as Waterloo? We can form some notion of this by a sort of analogy, if we are content to accept the statement of Marshal Saxe, said to be a high authority on such matters, who lays it down as a truth, that for each man killed in battle the weight of an average-sized man is expended in lead. This is said to have been verified at Solferino, where the Austrians fired eight million four hundred thousand rounds, and killed two thousand of the enemy, which gives four thousand two hundred rounds per man killed. Taking a bullet at one ounce weight, we have four thousand two hundred ounces, or over eighteen stone—about equal to one average man and a half; so the Marshal was under the mark. If these figures are reliable, it would seem that in battles, as with pugnacious dogs, there is noise out of all proportion to the amount of damage done; and the risks to life in war, as compared with those incidental to ordinary life in Bengal, need not seriously alarm us. The weapons of precision now in use have wrought a change, perhaps, to the great saving of lead. Still, these are stubborn figures to deal with; and a mortality of eighty-four per thousand children, and a proportionately high rate for adults, in the Indian plains, shows that, all precautions notwithstanding, the white man in the tropics or under an Eastern sun is in the wrong place.

It is estimated that nine to ten thousand natives are killed annually in Bengal alone by snakes; and throughout India, at a rough calculation—probably very much under the mark—twenty thousand persons lose their lives from this cause every year. There is no perceptible diminution in the number of these deadly reptiles; on the contrary, they are seemingly increasing, notwithstanding that government puts a price on the head of every snake

destroyed; and small though the reward may be, indigent peasants are not slow to avail themselves of it, and a snake that ventures to show itself rarely survives the discovery. The cry of *Sámp!* (snake) has a magical effect on the most apathetic and inert of natives.

Those whose experience of snakes is acquired in the 'Zoo,' can form but a faint idea of the rapidity with which the indolent-looking ophidian can move when so inclined; and were one to escape from its glass cage in that interesting collection, the agility of its movements would only be equalled by that of the astonished spectators towards the outer air. Were the habits of the snake family more aggressive and less retiring than they are, this sprightliness would be inconvenient beyond measure; and but for this tendency to shun man and escape from him at all times, the bill of mortality, which Sir Joseph Fayrer has shown us is frightfully large, would be infinitely greater than it is. Happily, self-preservation is an instinct as strong in serpents as in the hares of our fields.

But to return to the European in India and his share of risk incurred. There are obvious reasons why so large a percentage of our Aryan brethren fall victims. Barefooted and barelegged, and with that belief in *kismet* (fate) which, sometimes to his advantage, oftener to his prejudice as a man of the world, imbues the soul of 'the mild Hindu,' he trusts his bronzed nether limbs unhesitatingly in places where snakes are known to abound, and it is only a question whether or not he happens to touch one. With that sublime indifference to the danger, acquired by custom and a familiarity with it from his babyhood, he coils himself up, with or without his scanty garment of cotton stuff, on the bare earthen floor of his mud-hut, or beneath the spreading branches of a tree, and falls into a sleep, from which neither mosquitoes nor the chorus of predatory jackals, nor the screech-owls in the branches above, can rouse him. Many a time, perhaps, he has seen a snake killed on that very spot. But what does it matter to Ramcherrun or Bojoo? Are not snakes in other places too? In one minute he is snoring out the watch of night. He dreams of his rice and paddy fields, mortgaged at ninety per cent. interest, and ever likely to remain so; he dreams of his *mahájon* (banker), whose superior knowledge of the three Rs enabled that rascal to so circumvent his neighbours. Then he turns over, and rolls quietly on the top of the deadly *krait*; or stretching out his brown hand, grasps the tender back of a passing cobra, which bites him, and he dies! The gods had it so. His time was come—*kismet! kismet!!* Toolsi Kándoo is re-thatching his house, and in uplifting the old rotten grass, squeezes a roof-snake (*sankor*) reposing therein, which resents the intrusion with its sharp teeth, and Toolsi is gathered to his fathers. Then there is Sirikisson Beldar cutting bamboos for his new roof, or the jungle grasses which are to furnish his house with matting, and the foe is molested, and makes his bite felt—before retreating to safer quarters. Gidari Teli has gone in the gloaming

or in the darker night to fill his *lota* at the village well hard by, and returns only to tell his child-wife to run for the *byd* (native doctor), who will apply his nostrums, and the Brahmin to sing his incantations and perform sundry mystical rites whilst he, poor Gidari, passes away to the happy land. But even of white men there are few indeed who, after some years in the Indian plains, return home without a lively recollection of one or more escapes, for which at the moment they were thankful to Providence.

In large towns like Bombay or Calcutta, snakes are not unknown; whilst in and about the bungalows of most, if not all country stations, they are common, and pay visits to these habitations at inconveniently short intervals. There are few bungalows the thatched roof of which is not the occasional abode of one objectionable species—the *sankor*, or roof-snake; whilst round about, in the hollows of old trees, or beneath the flooring of the rooms, or in the garden hard by, come at intervals specimens more or less dangerous to human life. It will serve to show the nature of the danger from this source, if I relate a few of my own personal experiences during a residence of some years in Bengal.

Of the many snakes killed by me—some hundreds—I retain the liveliest recollection of the first my eyes beheld. I was then living in a small three-roomed bungalow, the flooring of which was almost on a level with the ground outside. Amongst other annoyances, the place was infested with rats; and being so low, the number of little toads that made free use of every room was incredible. My *sweeper* would in a short time fill and refill a *gylah* (a sort of round earthen pot capable of holding more than a gallon) up to the brim with toads. We called them frogs, but they were really toads of a jumping kind; and the only thing to be said in their favour was their capacity for swallowing mosquitoes, beetles, and other kinds of creeping and flying insects. But as a set-off against this advantage comes the fact that snakes with equal avidity swallow and relish toads, and are ever in quest of these dainty morsels. The rats, however, troubled me most. They destroyed my shoes, drank up the oil of my night-lamp—a very primitive arrangement, known as the *tel-buttee*, that carries one back to the time of Moses—sometimes extinguishing the light in the process; and made sad havoc of my cotton-stuffed pillows, the contents of which I would often discover, after an absence of a few days from home, strewn about the floor, and the pillow-cases ruthlessly destroyed; and it was not an uncommon thing to find a fat rat, which had effected an entrance through the mosquito curtains, nibbling away within an inch of my nose as I lay in bed. They held high revels in an old sideboard stored with sundry eatables, and so loud was the noise amongst the crockery therein, that often I had to get up and put the rebels to flight. In desperation, I determined one night to try what smoke would do to keep them out. Accordingly, I placed a piece of smouldering brown paper in the cupboard, watching, stick in hand, for the first rodent that should be caught in the act of sliding down the leg-supports on which this piece of furniture stood. I had not long to wait. Out came rat No. 1, and met his death on the spot. Chuckling over my

success, I stood expectant of No. 2; but in place of him, came a brown snake about twenty-four inches long, close to my bare feet. This was much more than I bargained for. My stick was down on him in a second; but, unluckily, so was the *tel-buttee*, held in the other hand; and the brown snake and I were together in total darkness, a most unpleasant predicament for both of us.

I knew nothing of the habits of this or any other specimen of the snake family, so that, as a matter of course, a bite, to be followed by death in fifteen minutes, seemed to me quite inevitable! And I did, on the spur of the moment, about the very worst thing I could have done under the circumstances, that is, groped for the door at all hazards, and shouted for a light. It was five minutes before this could be obtained; the sleeping Hindu will stand a lot of waking, and is some time collecting his wits from the realms of slumber; and the snake was gone. We found a hole in the corner of the room, through which the experienced eyes of my servants at once discovered he had made his exit. But as this only led into an inner wall dividing the rooms, I had the discomfort of knowing that he shared my bungalow, and would certainly come again some other day. And so he did—or one like him—three days later, and was squeezed to death in the hinges of the door, and in broad daylight.

My next snake, I remember, was a large cobra—whose bite is certain death. Being fresh to the country, and determined not to be imposed upon, I had not grown to the habit of handing over all my belongings to the care of native servants, of whose language I scarcely knew a word, and of whose integrity and honesty I had heard none but the worst reports; and I strove manfully to keep a tight hand over everything and every one, and, from personal observation, to know how I stood in regard to supplies and household requisites of all kinds; and in particular, for financial reasons, to guard jealously my stock of wines and beer—expensive commodities in the East, and apt to disappear miraculously. In a word, I kept the keys of my own stores, and did not intrust them absolutely, as I afterwards saw the wisdom of doing, to my *khanama* (butler); and it was my custom then to issue a certain number of bottles of wine or beer or tinned meats, &c., from out the *go-down* or storeroom, as occasion required. One end of the bungalow veranda was bricked up, to form a small storeroom for such commodities; and it had ever been my custom to enter this somewhat dark chamber with caution, owing to its being rather a favourite haunt of scorpions and centipedes; and the latter being my pet aversion, I always kept a sharp lookout. On one occasion, however, I was pushing aside a large empty box which had contained brandy, when, to my horror, I saw a large snake reposing therein. Escaping with great rapidity, he coiled at bay on the floor, with hood expanded and eyes glistening savagely at me. Seizing the box, I threw it at him and on him; whilst my servant ran to the other end of the veranda for a stick, with which he was soon and easily despatched. On another occasion, I remember, in opening a bathroom door, a small but deadly snake, by some means or other perched on the top of it, fell straight on to my wrist, and thence to the floor; and similarly, whilst seated

one morning on a pony, inspecting some repairs in an outbuilding used as a stable, the same species of snake fell from the bamboo and thatch of the inner roof right on to my head, thence to my left arm and the saddle-bow, and so to the ground, where he escaped in some straw. Some time later, in picking up a handful of fresh-cut grass to give a favourite Cabul horse, I felt something moving in my hand; and dropping the grass, out wriggled a *krait*, a snake that for deadly poison ranks nearly next to the cobra.

I have heard of snakes, though I have never seen one, lying concealed beneath bed-clothes and under pillows. Twice, however, on awaking in the morning I have found that I have been honoured with the company during the night of an adder in my bedroom; and one morning, on taking my seat at my writing-desk, I discovered a very large cobra—nearly four and a half feet long—lying at full length at my feet close against the wall. He made for the open door, and I killed him in the veranda with a riding-whip; whilst the natives, as usual in such emergencies, were rushing wildly about, and searching in the most unlikely corners for a more effective weapon. It was always a salutary habit of mine, for which I have to thank the sagacity of an old and faithful attendant, to shake my riding-boots, preparatory to putting a foot into one—to eject a possible toad ensconced therein; or, as would frequently happen, old Ramcherrun boldly thrust his bronze fingers in for the like precaution; and when there happened to be a toad or frog inside, how the old rascal used to make me laugh at the precipitate way in which he would withdraw his hand, exclaiming, with a startled countenance: '*Kuchh hai bhiitar!*' (There is something inside.) On one occasion, as luck would have it, he adopted the shaking process, when out dropped a small snake, which I identified as a roof-snake (*sankor*). After this, I took care where I put my boots and shoes at night, and Ramcherrun, where he put his fingers.

Snakes are frequently found in what would seem to be the most unlikely places. As an instance, a lady of my district very nearly put her hand on a live cobra in reaching an ornament from the mantel-piece; the reptile was lying quietly next the wall, behind a clock. How he got there, was a mystery never solved. A friend of mine, who had set a country-made wooden trap for rats, caught a cobra instead, much to the horror of his *mehsur* (sweeper). But, more curious still, a snake was discovered by a lady whom I knew, a few years ago, on a drawing-room table of a station bungalow. It was of a small venomous species, and was hiding beneath a child's picture-book. On this occasion, the lady on taking up the book was bitten; but after suffering considerable pain, recovered.

Some very odd notions and superstitions regarding snakes obtain amongst the natives. There is a large snake called the *dharmin*, said to be a cross between the cobra and some other species. It is said to refrain from biting; but when pursued, strikes with its tail, which, according to the natives, can inflict painful and even dangerous wounds; and the belief obtains that this snake is quite innocuous on Sundays and Thursdays! It is considered unlucky to speak of any venomous snake by its proper

name—nicknames or roundabout expressions being considered preferable; just as the correct word for cholera morbus is avoided, as in the highest degree dangerous to employ, and likely to bring the disease. Many natives who walk about after dusk repeatedly strike the ground before them with their *lathee* (a bamboo staff), and go at a slow pace; and the *dak*-runners or rural postmen, who run stages of five or six miles carrying the mail-bags, invariably carry a number of loose iron rings on their shoulder-pole, to make a jingling sound as they trot along. There are several versions of the object of this; the primary object being no doubt to scare away snakes and other noxious animals; but the noise also gives warning to the next stage-runner of the approach of the mail-bags.

Snakes are said to avoid approaching a naked light or flame of any kind. This is an error, as I have more than once discovered, and very nearly to my cost. I perceived, on one occasion, almost encircling the oil-lamp on the floor of one of my dressing-rooms, what appeared to be a stream of spilt oil as it were staining the matting; and I was in the act of lowering the candle which I carried, for a closer inspection, when the dark line moved off within three inches of my shoeless feet. It was a black snake, three feet long, called the *bahrá sámp*, literally *deaf adder* or *snake*.

Strange as it may seem, there are people—few though they may be—who never saw a snake in India. I was lately solemnly assured by a friend who had spent three years in the Mofussil, frequently camping out, that he had never once seen one dead or alive. At one bungalow where I resided a few years—a bungalow admirably situated, and well raised from the ground—I killed, or saw killed, during three months of one monsoon rains, between eighty and ninety poisonous snakes on the premises, of which more than one-third were either in the rooms or the veranda. My successor, who lived there about twelve months, encountered no more than four snakes! He was succeeded by a man who, in June, July, and August, killed over one hundred. One bungalow in a station may be infested with them, whilst another, a couple of hundred yards off, is completely free. Places the most likely-looking for the habitation of snakes, on account of jungle and dense vegetation close by, are often the most free of them. And so it often is with those pests the mosquitoes. Vast numbers of fowls are destroyed by snakes, and the cook-room is a place which seemingly has great attractions. The largest cobras I ever saw I have killed—sometimes shot—in the *bawarchi-khāna* (cook-house).

I have spoken of the fondness of snakes for frogs and toads. There is a well-known cry of a very plaintive and peculiar description often heard, especially during the rains, uttered by these unfortunate frogs when being set at by a snake. 'Beng bolta hai, kodárwand!' (A frog is shouting) was the information frequently imparted to me by my little servant-boy Nubbee, as I lay beneath the punka enjoying my post-prandial cigar, ever ready, as he knew me to be, to kill the snake and save the frog. Out we would sally, he holding my kerosene table-lamp, and I armed with a polo-stick; and we rarely failed to find amongst

the bushes adjacent to the bungalow the object of our search—a krait or a *ghoman* (cobra) besetting a terrified frog, that had not shrieked in vain, and which, by a timely rescue, lived to return to the bosom of its family once more.

A WITNESS FOR THE DEFENCE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

It had been raining steadily all day. It was still raining as I stood at the corner of a great London thoroughfare on that wretched November night. The gutter babbled, the pavement glistened, humanity was obliterated by silk and alpaca; but the night-wind was cool and fresh to me, after a day spent in a hot police court, heavy with the steam of indigo-dyed constables, of damp criminals, and their frowzy friends and foes. I was later than usual. That was why I stood hesitating, and turning over and over the few shillings in my pocket, painfully gathered by a long day's labour as a young and struggling legal practitioner. I thought of my poor little sick wife, waiting so longingly for me in the dull lodgings miles away. I also considered the difficulty of earning two shillings, and the speed with which that sum disappeared when invested in cabs. I thought of the slowness and uncertainty of the 'bus, crowded inside and out; again of the anxious eyes watching the clock; and my mind was made up. I called a hansom from the rank just opposite to me, and jumped in, after giving my directions to so much of the driver as I could make out between his hat and his collar.

I felt tired, hungry, and depressed, so that I was glad to drop off to sleep, and forget weariness and worry for a little while; and I remained unconscious of bad pavement and rattling rain, blurred glass and misty lights, until the stoppage of the cab roused me. Thinking that I had arrived at my journey's end, and wondering why the glass was not raised, I smote lustily on the roof with my umbrella. But the voice of the driver came down to me through the trap in a confidential wheeze; and at the same time I saw that there was a great crowd ahead, and heard that there were shouts and confusion, and that my cab was one of a mass of vehicles all wedged together by some impassable obstacle.

'Pliceman says, sir,' explained cabby, 'as there's bin a gas main hexploded and blowed up the street, and nothin' can't get this way. There's bin a many pussions hinjured, sir. I'll have to go round the back streets.'

'All right,' I replied. 'Go ahead, then.'

Down slammed the trap; the cab was turned and manœuvred out of the press; and I soon found myself traversing a maze of those unknown byways, lined with frowzy lodging-houses and the dead walls of factories and warehouses, which hem in our main thoroughfares. I was broad awake now, excited by the news of the accident, speculating on its causes, and thinking of the scenes of agony and sorrow to which it had given rise, and of my own fortunate escape. The hansom I was in was an unusually well-appointed one for those days. It was clean and well cushioned; it had a mat on the floor instead of mouldy straw. Against one side was a metal match-holder, with a roughened surface; bearing,

as the occasional street lamps showed me, the words 'Please strike a light. Do not injure the cab.' On each side of the door was a small mirror, placed so as to face the driver; so that I could see reflected therein, through the windows, those parts of the street which the cab had just passed.

We careered up one dreary lane and down another, until, having just turned to the left into a rather wider thoroughfare, we were once more brought up. This time it was a heavy dray discharging goods at the back entrance of a warehouse. It was drawn up carelessly, occupying, in fact, more room than it should in that ill-lighted place. We were almost into it before we could pull up. To avoid accident, the cabman threw his horse half across the road; and in this position proceeded gently but firmly to expostulate with the drayman after the manner of cabmen on such occasions. The surly fellow would take no notice, and made no attempt for some minutes to give us room. I was too listless to interfere, and lay back in the cab, leaving the driver to get over the difficulty as he might.

In the right-hand glass, owing to our slanting position across the road, I could see reflected, a few yards off, the corner of the street out of which we had just turned, with the lamp which stood there, and above the lamp the name of the street, which, though reversewise on the mirror, I made out to be 'Hauraki Street.' The queer name attracted me; and I was wondering what colonial experiences could have led the builder to select it, when I saw the reflected figure of a man come into the light of the lamp along the road in which we stood. He was young, but dishevelled and dirty, and evidently wet through. His clothes, bad as their condition was, looked somehow as if their wearer had been, or ought now to be, in a better condition of body than his present one. He stared desolately about him for a while, as if to see whether there could be any other creature so miserable as to be lounging purposelessly about, without an umbrella, in such a place on such a night. A neighbouring clock struck eight, and he seemed to turn his head and listen till the clangour ceased. Then he inspected the sleeves of his coat, as people always do when unduly damp, and drew one of them across his forehead, taking off his hat for the purpose, as though hot from exercise. Then he carefully produced from inside the sodden and melancholy hat a folded piece of paper and a clay-pipe. He filled the pipe from the paper, restored the latter to the hat, and put the hat on his head. Then he looked helplessly at the pipe. I guessed that the poor wretch had neither a match nor a penny to buy one. A thought seemed to strike him. He looked up suddenly at the lamp, and I saw his face for the first time. I am an observer of faces. This one was peculiarly short and broad, with a projecting sharp-pointed chin, a long slit of a mouth, turned down at the corners; as it was now half open in perplexity, it disclosed a conspicuous blank, caused by the loss of one or more front teeth. The eyes were small and dark, and half-shut with a curious prying air. This was all I noticed; for now the man began awkwardly and laboriously to 'swarm' the lamp-post; evidently with the view of getting a light for his pipe. Having got about half-way to the top, he

incautiously stopped to rest, and instantly slid to the bottom. Patiently he began all over again; and I now saw that if he was not altogether tipsy, he was something very like it. This time his efforts were so ill-judged that he caved in the melancholy hat against the cross-bar of the lamp; and the last I saw of him as my picture vanished at the whisking round of the hansom, he was blindly waving his pipe at the lamp-glass, his head buried in the wreck of his hat, as he vainly endeavoured to introduce the pipe through the opening underneath, and beginning once more to slide impotently down the shaft.

I got home without further adventure in time not to be missed by my little invalid; but for several days the queer street-name abode with me, as the merest trifles will haunt an over-anxious mind, such as mine then was. I repeated it to myself hundreds of times; I made it into a sort of idiotic refrain or chorus, with which I kept time to my own footsteps on my daily tramps. I tried to make rhymes to it, with indifferent success; and altogether it was some weeks before the tiresome phantom finally departed.

Also, I often wondered whether the drenched young man with the crushed hat had managed to get a light after all.

Twelve years had gone, and with them my troubles—such troubles at least as had been with me at the time of the beginning of this story. I was now a prosperous solicitor, with a large and varied practice, and with a comfortable home on the northern heights of London, wherein to cherish the dear wife, no longer sick, who had been my loving companion through the years of scarcity. The firm's practice was a varied one; but personally I devoted myself to that branch of it in which I had begun my professional life—the criminal law. In this I had fairly won myself a name both as an advocate and a lawyer—often very different things—which tended to make me a richer man every day. And I am glad to be able to say that I had added to this reputation another yet more valuable—that of being an honourable and honest man.

Late one afternoon, as I sat in my office after a long day at the Central Criminal Court, making preparations for my homeward flight, a stranger was shown in to me. He sat down and began his story, to which I at first listened with professional attention and indifference. But I soon became a trifle more interested; for this, as it seemed, was a tale of long-deferred vengeance, falling after the lapse of years upon the right head; such as we lawyers meet with more often in sensational novels—of which we are particularly fond—than in the course of practice.

Some dozen years ago, he said, there had lived in a remote suburb of London an elderly maiden lady, named Miss Harden, the only daughter of a retired merchant skipper, who had got together a very tolerable sum of money for a man of his class. Dying, he had left it all to his only living relative and friend, his daughter; and on the interest thereof she managed to live comfortably, and even to save quite a third of her income. These moneys she—being, like many maiden ladies, of a suspicious nature—always declined to invest in any way,

but kept them in an oaken cupboard in her sitting-room, which cupboard she was accustomed to glorify for its impregnable nature, when the danger she ran by keeping so much money about the house was represented to her. Perhaps she was fortified in her obstinacy by the consideration that she was not entirely alone and unprotected, though most people thought that such protection as she had was worse than none. It consisted in the presence of an orphaned nephew, to whose mother, on her deathbed, Miss Harden had solemnly promised that she would never forsake the child. She had been as good as her word, and better—or worse; for she had treated the boy with such foolish indulgence that he had grown up as pretty a specimen of the black-guard as could be found in the neighbourhood. After being expelled from school, he had never attempted to improve himself or earn his own living in any way, except by betting (and losing), and by making free with certain cash of his first and only employer; which questionable attempt at providing for himself would certainly have led to his being for some time provided for by his country, but for the tears and prayers of his aunt, and the sacrifice of a round sum out of her hoardings. From that time he lived with her, and she cherished and endured him as only women can. Scolding him when he came home tipsy at night, putting him carefully to bed, and forgiving him the next morning, only to scold and put him to bed again the same evening; so, with little difference, went on their lives for years.

But at last this loving patience began to wear out, and as the aunt got older and more irritable, the nephew's little ways caused louder and more frequent disagreements. One morning, things came to a climax. She caught him actually trying to set free the imprisoned secrets of the impregnable cupboard with a pocket-knife. Being interrupted and violently abused—the old lady was very ready with her tongue—he turned and struck her. She did then and there what she had threatened often of late; ordered him out of the house, and what was more, saw him out. There was rather a scene at the street-door, and the lookers-on heard him say, in answer to her vows that she would never see him again, 'When you do see me again, you'll be sorry enough;' or words to that effect. The last time he was known to have been in the neighbourhood was about three o'clock that afternoon, in a public-house close by, which he used to haunt. He was then in a maudlin state, and was descending to a mixed audience on his wrongs and on the meanness of his relative. He further produced the knife with which he had attempted the cupboard, and was foolish enough to say that 'he wished he had tried it on the old woman herself, and he would too, before the day was out.'

All this greatly amused his rough hearers, who supplied him well with liquor, and generally kept the game alive, until the landlord, becoming jealous of the reputation of his house, turned him out of doors. From that moment he disappeared; but the same night a horrible murder was committed. The aunt had sent her one servant out for half an hour. The girl left at a quarter to eight, and returned at a quarter

past, to find the poor old maid lying dead on the floor, while the oak cupboard was open and empty. Screaming with horror, the girl called in help; and one among the crowd that filled the house before the police came picked up on the floor a knife, which he identified as the very one which the nephew, whom he knew well, had exhibited that afternoon at the public-house. He repeated this evidence at the subsequent inquest, and it was confirmed by many others who knew both the knife and its owner. A verdict of wilful murder was returned against the nephew, whom we will call John Harden, but who had disappeared completely and entirely. Inquiries, advertisements, and the minute description of him which was posted, together with the offer of a heavy government reward for his apprehension, throughout the three kingdoms—all were useless. In the course of time the affair died out, except as an occasional remembrance in the minds of those who had been most intimately connected with it.

But on the afternoon of the very day on which the stranger waited upon me, John Harden had been recognised in the Strand by my informant. He wore a well-fitting suit of dark clothes, and was, in fact, the confidential servant of a retired Australian millionaire, who had come to England to spend the rest of his days there. On being addressed by his name, he had at first appeared surprised, though in no way alarmed; but almost immediately admitted that he had formerly gone by that name, though he had for years borne another. His accuser straightway gave him into the custody of the nearest constable, charging him with the murder. Then indeed the unfortunate man showed the greatest horror and disturbance of mind, protesting that he did not even know his aunt was dead; that he had intended to go and see her as soon as he could be relieved from attendance on his master; that he had even written to her several times, but having received no reply, had concluded that she was determined to renounce him entirely. He was locked up at the station for the night, and was to be brought before the magistrate in the morning; and my informant's object in coming to me was to instruct me to prosecute, not being content to leave that duty to the police. He was, it seemed, the very man who had, as already stated, picked up the knife with which the murder had been committed; and he expressed himself as being extremely anxious that justice should be done, and that the murderer should not escape. He stated that, though badly enough off twelve years ago, he had since succeeded in trade; that he knew the poor old lady well, having done many an odd job about the house for her; and that he was willing, for justice' sake, to put his hand as reasonably far into his pocket as could be expected. As he sat opposite to me, his face burning with indignation, I could not help thinking that it would be well for the country and the lawyers if all citizens were as prompt as my new client to spend their means in exposing and punishing crime in which they had no individual interest. I said something to this effect, and my remarks were received with a proper pride, tempered by modesty. 'He hoped he knewed his dooty as a man, and tried to do it.'

It so happened that I was obliged to leave town

next day, to attend to certain matters connected with an estate of which I was a trustee, in another part of the country. I told him this, adding that the magistrate would certainly send the case for trial, and that I should be back in town in time for the next Old Bailey sessions, and that I would be responsible that the case should receive proper attention in the meantime. He merely said that he left the matter in my hands, and that if I said it would be all right, he was content, and so departed, engaging to attend to have his evidence taken down next morning. I went to the office of a brother practitioner on whom I knew I could rely, handed him my written instructions, requested him to take up the case and work it until my return, and then did what every business man should be able to do—wiped the subject altogether out of my mind for the present.

LITERARY SELF-ESTIMATES.

THE question, Can an author rightly criticise his own work? has been variously answered. Gibbon emphatically says in his Autobiography that a writer himself is the best judge of his own performance, since no one has so deeply meditated on the subject, and no one is so sincerely interested in the event. Samuel Johnson did not go quite so far as this. In his Life of Dryden, he writes that, in the preface to one of his plays, Dryden 'discusses a curious question, whether an author can judge well of his own productions; and determines, very justly, that of the plan and disposition, and all that can be reduced to principles of science, the author may depend upon his own opinion; but that in those parts where fancy predominates, self-love may easily deceive. He might have observed, that what is good only because it pleases, cannot be pronounced good till it has been found to please.'

Certainly, from some points of view, nobody can be a better judge of an author's productions than the author himself. He alone knows fully the difficulties he had to contend with; he alone knows the places where he wrote with full knowledge and deep insight, and the places where he wrote carelessly and with no clear understanding; he alone can tell exactly how much he owes to other writers, and how far his work is the result of his own toil and thought. But that merciful dispensation of providence which prevents us from seeing ourselves as others see us, frequently so far affects an author's judgment of his own writings, that it has become almost a commonplace of criticism that the greatest of writers occasionally prefer their own least worthy works. They are apt to measure the value of what they have done not by its intrinsic merit, but by the difficulty of doing it; and knowing the pains it has cost them, and being, as Hazlitt says, apprehensive that it is not proportionately admired by others, who know nothing of what it cost them, they praise it extravagantly. Moreover, severe criticism often tempts an author to praise some neglected work of his above what he is conscious to be its real deserts; just as, when her chickens are attacked by the kite, the fond hen rushes straightway to defend the one which seems most in danger.

Milton's preference of *Paradise Regained* to

Paradise Lost has often been instanced as an example of the false judgments writers form of their works. As a matter of fact, however, this opinion attributed to Milton is overstated. As has recently been pointed out by Mr Mark Pattison, all we know about the matter is, that Milton 'could not bear to hear with patience' that it was inferior to *Paradise Lost*. Of a writer who formed the most exaggerated and erroneous notions about the merits of his works, no better example could be given than Southey. He was indeed, as Macaulay remarked in his Diary, arrogant beyond any man in literary history; for his self-conceit was proof against the severest admonitions, and the utter failure of one of his books only confirmed him in his belief of its excellence. When William Taylor asked him who was to read his massive quartos on Brazil, he replied: 'That one day he should by other means have made such a reputation that it would be thought a matter of course to read them.' About *Kehama*, he wrote: 'I was perfectly aware that I was planting acorns while my contemporaries were planting Turkey beans. The oak will grow; and though I may never sit under its shade, my children will.' To one of his contemporaries, he writes in 1805: 'No further news of the sale of *Madoe*. The reviews will probably hurt it for a while; that is all they can do. Unquestionably the poem will stand and flourish. I am perfectly satisfied with the execution—now, eight months after its publication, in my cool judgment. William Taylor has said it is the best English poem that has left the press since *Paradise Lost*. Indeed, this is not exaggerated praise, for there is no competition.' On another occasion Southey writes: '*Thalaba* is finished. You will, I trust, find the *Paradise* a rich poetical picture, a proof that I can employ magnificence and luxury of language when I think them in place. One overwhelming propensity has formed my destiny, and marred all prospects of rank or wealth; but it has made me happy, and it will make me immortal.' In a letter written in 1815, he modestly remarks that nothing could be more absurd than thinking of comparing any of his pieces with *Paradise Lost*; but that with Tasso, with Virgil, with Homer, there might be fair grounds of comparison! Nor did he think more meanly of himself as an historian, for he predicted that he would stand above Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon; nay, he went even further, and challenged comparison with the Father of History. 'I have flattered myself,' he says, 'that my *History of Brazil* might in more points than one be compared to Herodotus, and will hereafter stand in the same relation to the history of that large portion of the new world as his History does to that of the old.'

Southey's friend and admirer, Walter Savage Landor, resembled him in the exalted notions he entertained of the value of his own productions. 'I have published,' he says in the conversation with Hare, 'five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations*; cut the most of them through the middle, and there will remain in the decimal fraction enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late, but the dining-room will be well lighted, the guests few and select.' 'Be patient!' he says in another place. 'From the higher heavens of poetry it is long before the radiance of the

brightest star can reach the world below. We hear that one man finds out one beauty, another man finds out another, placing his observatory and instruments on the poet's grave. The worms must have eaten us before we rightly know what we are. It is only when we are skeletons that we are boxed, and ticketed, and shown. Be it so! I shall not be tired of waiting.' Knowing, he again writes, that in two thousand years there have not been five volumes of prose (the work of one man) equal to his *Conversations*, he could indeed afford to wait. If conscious of earthly things, we fear he may be waiting still.

With better reason than Southey and Landor, Wordsworth nourished in his breast a sublime self-complacency, and, in spite of adverse criticisms, wrote calmly on, 'in the full assurance that his poems would be unpopular, and in the full assurance that they would be immortal.' To a friend who wrote condoling with him about the severity with which his poems were criticised in the *Edinburgh Review*, he replied: 'Trouble not yourself about their present reception; of what moment is that compared with what I trust is their destiny? To console the afflicted; to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier; to teach the young and gracious of every age to see, to think, and to feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous—this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform long after we—that is, all that is mortal of us—are mouldering in our graves.' Again: 'I doubt not that you will share with me an invincible confidence that my writings, and among these these little poems, will co-operate with the benign tendencies in human nature and society, wherever found, and that they will, in their degree, be efficacious in making men happier and wiser.'

Byron, to whom Macaulay denied the possession of any high critical faculty, was no better judge of his own poetry than he was of other people's. His *Child Harold's Pilgrimage* he thought inferior to his *Hints from Horace*, a feeble imitation of Pope and Johnson, which he repeatedly designed to publish, and was withheld from doing only by the solicitations of his friends, whom, to his astonishment, he could never bring to think of the matter as he did. Scott, who had few of the weaknesses common to literary men, was free from any tendency to unduly estimate his own writings. He always said that his poetry would never live, and was not to be compared with that of many of his contemporaries. He felt that though Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley were then comparatively neglected, the time would come when they would be recognised as having possessed more of the sacred fire of inspiration than he. 'I promise you,' he says in an epistle to an old friend, 'my oaks will outlast my laurels; and I pique myself more on my compositions for manure, than on any other compositions to which I was ever accessory.' This was, of course, in great part badinage. But he repeatedly, both in writing and conversation, placed literature below some other professions, and especially the military, of whose greatest representative then living, the Duke of Wellington, his admiration knew no bounds.

'There are two things,' said Dr Johnson to Reynolds, 'which I am confident I can do very

well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner; the other is a conclusion proving from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and the public.' The Doctor was, on the whole, a very honest critic of his own productions. 'I showed him,' writes Boswell, 'as a curiosity that I had discovered, his translation of Lobo's Account of Abyssinia, which Sir John Pringle had lent me, it being then little known as one of his works. He said: "Take no notice of it," or, "Don't talk of it." He seemed to think it beneath him, though done at six-and-twenty. I said to him: "Your style, sir, is much improved since you translated this." He answered with a sort of triumphant smile: "Sir, I hope it is." On one occasion, when some person read his *Irene* aloud, he left the room, saying he did not think it had been so bad. Reviewing the *Rambler* late in life, he shook his head, and said it was 'too wordy.'

A good specimen of honest, manly self-criticism is afforded by a letter of Sydney Smith's to Jeffrey, who had written to him complaining that he treated grave subjects in too jocular a vein. 'You must consider,' he writes, 'that Edinburgh is a very grave place, and that you live with philosophers who are very intolerant of nonsense. I write for the London, not for the Scotch market, and perhaps more people read my nonsense than your sense. The complaint was loud and universal about the extreme dullness and lengthiness of the *Edinburgh Review*. Too much, I admit, would not do of my style; but the proportion in which it exists enlivens the *Review*, if you appeal to the whole public, and not to the eight or ten grave Scotchmen with whom you live. . . . Almost any one of the sensible men who write for the *Review* could have done a much wiser and more profound article than I have done upon the Game Laws. I am quite certain nobody would obtain more readers for his essay on such a subject, and I am equally certain that the principles are right, and that there is no lack of sense in it.'

Macaulay also may be ranked among the writers who have formed correct judgments of their own works. 'I have written,' he wrote with great candour, to Macvey Napier, 'several things on historical, political, and moral questions, of which, on the fullest reconsideration, I am not ashamed, and by which I should be willing to be estimated. But I have never written a page of criticism on poetry or the fine arts which I would not burn if I had the power. I leave it to yourself to make the comparison. I am sure that on reflection you will agree with me. Hazlitt used to say of himself, "I am nothing if not critical." The case with me is directly the reverse. I have a strong and acute enjoyment of great works of the imagination; but I have never habituated myself to dissect them.' Not less sound was his estimate of his great History. A fortnight before its publication, he wrote in his Diary: 'The state of my own mind is this: when I compare my own work with what I imagine history ought to be, I feel dejected and ashamed; but when I compare it with some Histories which have a high repute, I feel re-assured.' At a subsequent

stage of the publication, he writes: 'I dawdled over my book most of the day, sometimes in good, sometimes in bad spirits about it. On the whole, I think that it must do. The only competition, so far as I perceive, it has to dread is that of the two former volumes. Certainly no other History of William's reign is either so trustworthy or so agreeable.' The following entry is interesting: 'I looked through —'s two volumes. He is, I see, an imitator of me. But I am a very unsafe model. My manner is, I think, and the world thinks, on the whole a good one; but it is very near to a bad manner indeed, and those characteristics of my style which are most easily copied are the most questionable.'

Of all classes of writers, perhaps the most vain are amateur poets and great classical scholars. An amusing instance of conceit in one of the former class is given in Cyrus Redding's *Recollections*. Once meeting with Colton, the author of *Lacon*, they entered into conversation, and Colton invited him to his house, and quoted many lines from a poem he was composing called *Hypocrisy*. 'Now,' said he, 'do you think any lines of Pope more euphonical than these?'

His conceit at first surprised Redding; but seeing his weak side, he flattered him. 'Really, they are very good, and very like'—

'There, sir; I think these will convince you I write verses of some merit.'

This anecdote reminds one of a certain amateur versifier whom Thomas Davidson, the 'Scottish Probationer,' once met with in his peregrinations, who used to read to his suffering auditor long poems of his own composition. When Davidson did violence to his conscience by praising any of them, the poetaster complacently remarked: 'Yes, it's capital.' How differently puerile vanity like this affects one, from the lofty words some great writers have used of their own works. How fine, for example, is the address of Bacon: 'Those are the Meditations of Francis of Verulam, which that posterity should be possessed of, he deemed their interest.' Horace, in one of his finest odes, says of himself: 'I have erected a monument more durable than brass, and more lofty than the regal height of the pyramids.' In a similar strain, Shakespeare writes in one of his sonnets:

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this lofty rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.

It would fail us to repeat all the anecdotes that might be told of the vanity of scholars. Richard Bentley, whom Macaulay calls the greatest scholar that has appeared in Europe since the revival of learning, always spoke, wrote, and acted as if he considered a great scholar the greatest of men. In the preface to his edition of Horace, he describes at some length the characteristics of the ideal critic, and pretty plainly indicates that he regarded himself as that model individual. If, in scholarship, Samuel Parr was inferior to Bentley, his vanity was at least equally colossal. 'Shepherd,' he once said to one of his friends, 'the age of great scholars is past. I am the only one now remaining of that race of men.' 'No man's horse carries more Latin than mine,' he one day observed to an acquaintance with whom he was out riding. In signal

contrast to the opinions these two worthies entertained of themselves was the verdict which Porson, the greatest Greek scholar England has seen, passed on himself. Being once asked why he had produced so little original matter, he replied: 'I doubt if I could produce any original work which could command the attention of posterity. I can only be known by my notes; and I am quite satisfied if, three hundred years hence, it shall be said that one Porson lived towards the close of the eighteenth century who did a good deal for the text of Euripides.'

BURIED ALIVE.

Of all the horrible and appalling calamities that can befall mortal man, we can imagine none more ghastly than that of being buried alive, and well authenticated records have placed beyond a doubt that it has occasionally happened. The case of the lady whose ring, cut from her finger by midnight violators of her tomb, was the means of saving her from a dreadful fate, has been often told. Her son, the eminent Dr L—, born many years after his mother had been buried, was the physician and friend of the family of the writer, one of whose earliest recollections is the hearing the story from the lips of an aged relative, while forming one of a group of small listeners gathered round and hanging with 'bated breath' on the narration. Children love to have the same stories told over and over again in the same words. They like to know what is coming—to watch with thrills of expectation for each detail. And these details, graphically given by one who had them from the very actors in the scene, were weird and vivid. The vault at midnight—the cutting off of the finger—the ghastly terror of the ruffians, when the dead woman sat up in her coffin and blood began to flow—the familiar knock coming to the house-door in the dead of night, heard by terrified maids, who, thinking their mistress's ghost was there, buried their faces, trembling, in their pillows. The bereaved husband lying sleepless in his grief, heard it too, and started at the sound. 'If my dear wife were not gone,' he thought, 'I should say that was her knock;' and when, more faintly, it again smote his ear, rising at last and going to the door, he was confronted by the resuscitated woman. All this was listened to with an interest intensified by the fact of its being true.

A curious coincidence respecting this event is that an exactly similar story is recorded in the annals of the family of the Earls of Mount-Edgumbe. In them we read that the mother of Richard Edgumbe, created first Baron in 1742, being at the time young and childless, died, apparently, at their seat, Cothele, near Plymouth. She was buried with a valuable ring on her finger; and the cutting this off by violators of the tomb, as in the case of Mrs L—, restored her to consciousness. Five years afterwards, she gave birth to a son.

In the year 1838, a remarkable instance of burying alive occurred at Cambray, in France. M. Marbois, a farmer residing at Sisoy, in that neighbourhood, had reared a large family, and acquired by his industry and good conduct, wealth

and consideration, so that he was chosen principal churchwarden of his parish, and appointed deputy-mayor. He had lived in harmony with his family, until the subject of a marriage his eldest son wished to contract, became the cause of a quarrel, and brought on fierce disputes between him and his children. Marbois was a man of violent passions; opposition made him frantic; and on one occasion, when the dispute ran higher than usual, he became so infuriated that he rose up and pronounced a fearful malediction upon his family. No sooner had the words passed his lips, than his whole frame suddenly collapsed; his face grew livid, his eyes fixed, his limbs stiffened, and he fell to the ground. Medical aid was called in; but all pulsation had ceased. Soon the body became cold, and his death was decidedly pronounced—the cause, a stoppage of the heart's action produced by violent excitement. This occurred on the 13th of January; and on the 16th the interment took place. There had been a severe frost, and the extreme hardness of the ground prevented the grave from being properly dug. It was therefore left shallow, with the intention of deepening it when the thaw should come. By the 23d the ground became sufficiently softened, and men were set to work to raise the body and finish the grave. On lifting the coffin, they fancied that they heard a sigh, and on listening attentively, they found the sounds of life repeated. Breaking open the coffin, and perceiving that faint actions of pulsation and respiration were going on to a certain extent, the men hurried off with the body to the house of the parish doctor, by whose efforts Marbois was at last restored to consciousness.

When the resuscitated man was able to recall what had taken place, he became overwhelmed with contrition, regarding the fate from which he so narrowly escaped as the deserved punishment of his sin. He sent for the clergyman of Sisoy, whom he entreated to mediate with his children, expressing his anxiety to make his peace with them and to recall his malediction. The result was a return to mutual understanding and the re-establishment of harmony in the household.

The distinguished physician Sir Henry Marsh, used to describe an event which occurred at the beginning of his medical career, many years before he had reached the eminence to which he afterwards attained. He was called in by the family doctor—a country practitioner—to attend upon Colonel H——, struck down suddenly by apoplexy. The fit was a severe one. All efforts to save the sick man proved unavailing; he never rallied, and at the end of a few days, to all appearance breathed his last. On the morning of the funeral, the two medical attendants deemed it right, as a last attention, to go and take leave of the remains of their patient before the coffin was screwed down. The family doctor, a jovial florid personage, on whom professional cares sat lightly, had been a friend, and oftentimes boon-companion, of the deceased. A bottle of port and glasses stood on a table near the coffin.

'Ah, my poor friend!' he said, pouring out a bumper and tossing it off; 'this was his favourite drink. Rare wine, too. He knew what was good, and never spared it. Many a generous glass we have had together. I'll drink another to his memory,' he cried; and another, and

another followed, until the wine rapidly gulped down, and at so unwonted an hour, began to tell upon the man, and make his eyes glisten and his speech grow thick.

'Why should you not pledge me now for the last time?' exclaimed the excited doctor, while he approached the corpse, and, to Sir Henry's inexpressible disgust at such revolting levity, pressed the glass to the pale lips. The contents went down the colonel's throat!

Sir Henry stood amazed; his eyes, which he was turning away from the unbecoming spectacle, were riveted on the corpse.

The jovial doctor, sobered in a moment, staggered back. 'Can a dead man drink?' he cried.

'Give him more—more!' exclaimed Sir Henry, recovering his presence of mind and seizing the bottle.

A tinge so slight that only a medical eye could have detected it, began faintly to suffuse the white face. The doctor tore away the shroud and placed his hand upon the heart. There was no movement; but they lifted the body out of the coffin and proceeded to adopt the measures proper for resuscitation.

Meanwhile, the hearse stood at the door; the funeral guests were assembling outside—carriages arriving; while within, all was commotion and suspense—servants hurrying to and fro fetching hot bricks, stimulants, restoratives, in obedience to the doctors' commands; the latter plying every means skill could devise to keep the flickering spark of life from dying out; and the startled family, half paralysed by the sudden revulsion, standing around, gathered in anxious, silent groups.

Breathlessly they watched for tidings. For a long time the result seemed doubtful—doubtful whether the hearse before the door, the gaping coffin, the graveclothes lying scattered about and trampled under foot, all the grim paraphernalia of death, hastily discarded in the first wild moment of hope—might not yet be needed to fulfil their mournful office. But no! Breath, pulsation, consciousness, were slowly returning.

Colonel H—— was given back to his family and home, filling again the place that it was thought would know him no more. And not until five-and-twenty years had passed away after that memorable morning, were his friends summoned—this time to pay him the last tribute.

A young officer returned from China related, apropos of burying alive, the following experience.

'On our passage home,' he said, 'we had in the transport, besides our own troops, a large draft of French soldiers. Disease soon broke out among the closely packed men, and deaths were of daily occurrence. The French dealt summarily with their dead. As soon as a poor fellow had breathed his last, he was stripped, a twenty-pound shot tied to his heels, and his body thrust through a porthole into the sea. John Bull's prejudices rebelled against such rapid proceedings. When we lost any of our comrades, they were allowed to lie for twelve hours covered with the Union-jack, and the burial service was read over them before they were committed to the deep. One day, a French sergeant, who had just fallen a victim to the pestilence, was brought

up on deck in the sheet in which he had died, to be thrown overboard. The twenty-pound shot had been fastened to his feet and the sheet removed, when, in pushing him through the port-hole, he was caught by a protruding hook or nail at the side, and stuck fast. A few more vigorous thrusts sent the body further through; and in so doing, the flesh was torn by the hook, and blood began to flow. The attention of the bystanders was attracted to this; and, moreover, they fancied that they saw about the corpse other startling symptoms. "The man's alive!" flew from mouth to mouth. In an instant, willing hands were pressing eagerly to the rescue, and before the body could touch the water, it was caught and brought up on deck.

'The French sergeant was one of the soundest men on board the transport-ship when we landed.'

CAMEO-CUTTING.

The best American artist in cameo-cutting has recently, says a contemporary, been interviewed upon his costly art. He was found pounding up diamonds with a pestle and mortar. This, he explained, was not the only costly part of cameo-making, which takes eyesight, a great deal of time and patience, and years of experience. Then the onyx stones, from which the cameos are made, are expensive, costing sometimes as much as fifty dollars. The choicest have a layer of cream-coloured stone on a dark chocolate-coloured base. But many persons like the red, orange, black, or shell pink stones just as well. They are found in the Uruguay Mountains and in Brazil. The onyx is a half-precious stone of the quartz family. It is taken to Europe, and cut into oval or oblong shapes, and Americans have to pay ten per cent. duty to get it through the custom-house. The cameo-cutter turned to his lathe by the window, and, rubbing some of the diamond dust, which he had mixed with sperm oil, on the end of a small drill, began his work. He was making for a cabinet piece a large cameo, two by two and a half inches, one of the largest ever cut, of an old gentleman in Germany, whose portrait was placed before him. 'I have one hundred and twenty-five of these soft iron drills,' he remarked; 'they are made soft so as to catch the diamond dust, which is the only thing that will cut a cameo. A cameo is indestructible, except you take a hammer and smash it. It is an old art, and was practised by the Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians. Dr Schlie-mann found some cameos in good preservation that were probably three thousand years old. It takes several weeks to cut a large piece like this. Afterwards, it has to be polished with tripoli, first being smoothed with emery and oil, using the lead instruments similar to those for cutting. It is easier to cut a profile than a full-face portrait. Some people prefer intaglios, in which the portrait is depressed instead of raised. They are made on sards and cornelians, the former being a dark-reddish brown, and the latter a clear red. They are harder to make than cameos. I have to take impressions of the work in wax as I go on. I usually cut portraits from photographs, but sometimes have done them from life, and also from casts of dead persons.' Among portraits which the artist had cut are those of ex-President

Hayes, Mrs Hayes, William Cullen Bryant, Bayard Taylor, Peter Cooper, and others. A large cameo copy of Gerôme's 'Cleopatra before Cæsar' was valued at fifteen hundred dollars.

ANGEL VISITORS.

In the graveyard gray and chill,
Veiled in shadow, hushed and still,
'Neath one drooping cypress tree,
They are laid, my darlings three—
Merry Robin, brave and bold;
Baby May, with locks of gold;
Darling Dolly, eh and fair,
With the grave-dust on her hair.
Now their joyous feet no more
Patter o'er the cottage floor;
Still they hover near, I know—
Lovely spirits, white as snow!

Ringingsounds of boyish mirth
Never round my childless hearth
In the morning light are heard,
Welcoming the early bird;
In the evening, drear and long,
Never maiden's vesper song
Bids discordant voices cease,
Fills the slumberous hush with peace;
Yet when bowed in tearful prayer,
Lo! they mount the silent stair!
Whispering, fluttering, to and fro—
Lovely spirits, white as snow!

Heavenly wisdom in their eyes,
Downward from the starlit skies,
On the moonbeams pale they glide,
Smiling angels side by side!
Folded in their loving arms,
Swiftly fade life's vague alarms.
When I feel their flowery breath
Fan my cheek, I long for death.
How my heart in rapture sings,
Listening to their rustling wings,
Making music sweet and low—
Lovely spirits, white as snow!

When the faint, uncertain glow
Of my taper burning low,
Dimly shows each vacant place,
Treasured curl and pictured face,
With a world of longing pain,
Empty hands are clasped in vain!
Then lie patient on my knee,
Till they come, my darlings three!
Bidding earthly sounds grow dumb,
In their shimmering robes they come,
Wondering at their mother's woe—
Lovely spirits, white as snow!

When I slumber, they are near,
Whispering in my dreaming ear,
Shedding beams of heavenly light
From their pinions silvery bright!
Ah! such holy truths they speak,
Kissing lip, and brow, and cheek!
'Peace!' they murmur o'er and o'er;
'We are with you evermore!
Angels count the mourner's hours;
Every cross is crowned with flowers.'
God has taught them this, I know—
Lovely spirits, white as snow!

FANNY FORRESTER.

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